

straight stemmed Rubber tree finds more admirers than branched specimens, which are more squat in shape. Those who like the bush form best can make their Rubber Plants branch at any desired height by cutting off the end of the stem. The part cut away may be rooted in heat in damp sand. The best time to cut them is in the late winter, just before the time for spring growth. Branches will soon be sent out after the top of the main stem has been cut away.

Moles.—A lady piquantly relates her trials with an army of moles that she cannot "catch, kill, or drive away," although she has tried everything she has ever heard of. It is a bad case when mole traps will not catch, or corn soaked in Fowler's solution of arsenic and dropped along their runways will not finish them. In this case I can only refer her to other said-to-be cures that other people have tried and have faith in. A dozen witnesses testify that the seed of Ricinus (Castor Bean), dropped here and there in their tunnels will make them leave. A Connecticut lady says a sure remedy is to drop handfuls of salt here and there in their runways. Others put ball potash or concentrated lye in their runs but that is cruel, for it burns wherever it touches. Some use sawdust soaked in tar, or with a stick punch holes here and there along their tunnels and drop in each hole a small quantity of kerosene (coal oil). These two last substances will kill choice plants if used close to their roots, so use caution. An ingenious soul, rightly conceiving that the mole is highly sensitive to smells, made a number of stiff pastboard tubes and put in the center of each a stinking moth-ball. Buried in the runways there was a dearth of moles directly. I heartily approve of the mole's judgment in leaving moth-ball-scented premises. I have felt like it myself.

Soil For Variegated Shrubs.—Do not manure the ground for golden or variegated leaved shrubs. The color is not as clear where fertilizers are used. Very rich ground means a quick, lush growth. Green is the normal color of leaf vegetation. Any departure from this rule is an abnormal one. Whatever imparts vigor to a plant tends to make it throw off its acquired markings and revert to its original stage. Abundant plant food supplies more chlorophyll or green coloring matter to the sap also.

Eucharis.—This is a beautiful flower worth taking a little pains to grow. It is more often seen in greenhouse than in a window, as it is easier in the former to secure a warm, moist, even temperature. Shortly after New Year Eucharis grow very fast. Keep them warm and moist until through flowering when they can be kept ten to fifteen degrees cooler and watered less freely. This gives them the needed semi-rest to enable them to get ready for bloom again. In summer they need plenty of water again. When fall comes keep them pretty dry for the next three months, supplying only enough water to keep them from losing their leaves. Pot them in loam and sand, with a small quantity of old crumbled manure and leaf loam.

A Plague of Ants.—A correspondent has suffered for years from annual raids of ants that literally swarm over everything and everywhere. "Last year," says this lady, "they killed ever so many plants, from Pansies to trees. All of our outdoor flowers were almost ruined by them. I have tried molasses and Paris green, but they only increase in numbers. They are everywhere, but I cannot find their holes or nest."

There is no use in trying to depend on killing all these ants after they have taken possession. A bushel of pyrethrum powder would not pepper them all or a hoghead of kerosene emulsion last long enough to get them all. They must be killed at the fountain head, in their nesting places. A few years ago a certain set of our pear trees had their blossoms ruined year after year by hordes of ants. We could not kill them off, for there



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were always new ones to take their places. One day we found their nest, a very large one, but entirely underground. A speedy and therefore merciful death was decreed for them. Big pot, little pot, kettle and boiler were filled with water which was brought to the boiling point. We used it, every day, on that ant nest. That was fifteen years ago, and there has been no recurrence of the trouble.

Holly Thistle.—Some one asks about a curious plant of which no one knows the name. It blooms quickly from seed, making a plant several feet tall. It has long and wide leaves, waved along the margins, and very spiny. Along each vein is a wide milk-white band or mottling. The flowers are like a purple thistle. Strange how the wheels of time go round. This new(?) plant is so very old that hundreds of years ago it was a common garden ornament. It is Carduus Maritima, a near relative of the common thistle. Everyone notices it because of its odd milky splashes, and it every now and then enjoys a brief popularity again. Our superstitious forefathers believed that a drop of the Virgin Mary's milk fell on its leaves, which ever after bore milk-white markings because of it. The old names for it were Milk Thistle and Holly Thistle. The peasantry used to eat its tops as greens, and cook the roots in stews. Like all thistles this will become a weed if not kept down with a firm hand.

An Impossibility.—A lady asks us to give a list of the six best roses, "I acknowledged to stand at the head of the Rose kind." It can't be done as long as the old adage holds true of

"Many men of many kinds, Many men of many minds."

A correspondent wants a companion Rose to a Crimson Rambler, which she enthusiastically declares is the grandest Rose in the world. Side by side with her letter is one from an artist. "I don't like Ramblers," writes he. "An artistic Rose to my mind is like a jewel in a right setting. Too many jewels denote vulgarity." Every class of Rose has its enthusiastic devotees. The best Hybrid Teas come nearer combining all merits of a Rose, and nearer pleasing all standards of taste than any other; yet any florist will tell you that they are by no means the Roses most freely purchased. In other words, no one Rose suits all.

The orange trees in the city are filled with luscious oranges. While there are not very many trees at any one place, many yards have thriving trees, and each tree is filled with fruit, and here and there may be found a tree from which hang clusters of grapefruit. So many trees contain fruit this season, that the remark is frequently heard, "Begins to look like old times."—Apalachicola Times.

Celery is here again in all its glory. It is an uncommonly satisfactory relish, it adds a fine flavor to a soup or salad, and it is at its best at the season when other vegetables are becoming scarce. As a recent government bulletin sums it up, "Coming as it does at a time of the year when large quantities of meat are consumed and green foods are not plentiful, the use of celery makes other foods more palatable and greatly aids digestion."—Orange County Reporter.

When the son leaves the farm the father is often at fault. No ambitious young man of full age cares to look forward to a life of half dependence and of doing things "father's way." It is not an inspiring sight to note a gray-haired, elderly "boy" chained down to the methods of a past generation by the insistence of an iron-willed parent. The man who is good for anything longs for independence and a chance to live his own life, to make his own mistakes if need be, and profit by them. The father who will not give his worthy son a free man's chance on the farm can scarcely complain if left alone in his old age. At best it is none too easy for the young and the old to work together in harmony on a farm, but with a spirit of concession and forbearance on both sides the firm of Father & Son, farmers, can be made a grand success.—American Cultivator.

Shrove Tuesday, commonly known as Mardi Gras day, in countries where there may be a carnival association.

A STORY OF AN EXPRESS PACKAGE.

Continued from page 781.)

lost, and it seems to me the height of absurdity for you to claim that it has taken all this time to learn where that package went to. No doubt you remember the old joke, which was formerly a favorite at the minstrel shows, with regard to why Eve was created. The answer was, "For Adam's express company." I think, now it would be a fair question to ask, why the earth was created and answer it in just exactly the same way. Your company is giving us just the evidence we wanted to make it clear to the people why we should have in this country a parcels post. The absurdity of your position, and the criminal negligence or carelessness which is responsible for the loss of a package of this kind will, sooner or later, force the American people to establish a parcels post. You say the matter is receiving "due consideration" from Mr. Potter. Now, in Heaven's name, what do you mean by such a statement as that? Does it require 145 days of "due consideration" to trace up a simple matter of the wrong shipment of a small package? You say you will at once advise me when Mr. Potter communicates with you. Will you be kind enough to give me Mr. Potter's



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personal address, and I will see if I can't quicken his means of communication. You request my further indulgence, but, my dear sir, I have no indulgence left. I have made up my mind that somebody is going to pay for this package. I hold the Adams Express Company responsible for it and you may rest assured that I shall keep after the Adams Express Company as long as I live, and endeavor to have the correspondence carried on after I pass away, if necessary. If you have exhausted the resources of the Adams Express Company please give me Mr. Potter's address, and I will endeavor to make life enjoyable to him.

Eleven days went by, and having given up hope of that "investigation," I was preparing to write to the president, vice-president and all officers and directors of the company in turn, when to my surprise a messenger came and paid me the \$10. I shall never know where those pepper plants went to; that "investigation" will remain a dead secret, and how the two companies settle with each other is not for me to understand. All I know is that after 159 days I am paid for the plants. I shall always believe that they paid the money to get rid of me, and that is the only way to collect such a debt. The man who gives up in disgust, as they expect him to, might as well bid good-bye to both package and money. "We have much to be thankful for!"